

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition

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September 29, 2010

The Honorable Blanche Lincoln
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate
Room 328-A / Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate
Room 328-A / Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lincoln & Ranking Member Chambliss:

The Agriculture Food & Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition, a group of scientific societies and science advocacy organizations promoting awareness, appreciation, and funding for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative competitive grants program, requests a hearing to review the progress of the AFRI program, along with other USDA competitive research programs, under Title VII of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill).

Under the auspices of USDA's National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA), AFRI grants fund research, education, and extension and integrated initiatives addressing issues of regional and national importance to the safety, sustainability, and quality of American agriculture. As USDA's premier extramural research program, AFRI discoveries sustain and improve many facets of agriculture including human nutrition, rural entrepreneurship, food safety, renewable energy production and environmental stewardship.

As AFRI's popularity grows among researchers in government, academia, and private industry, the AFRI Coalition believes a hearing would enhance this program's effectiveness, and assess possible adjustments in the next farm bill to ensure its continued success. A performance review ensures that American taxpayers continue to benefit from dividends generated by all NIFA research programs.

We appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to hearing from you..

Sincerely,

American Dairy Science Association
American Phytopathological Society
American Society for Horticultural Science
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Nutrition
American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers
American Society of Agronomy

American Society of Animal Science
American Society of Plant Biologists
American Veterinary Medical Association
Aquatic Plant Management Society
Biotechnology Industry Organization
Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics
Crop Science Society of America
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology
Federation of Animal Science Societies
Institute of Food Technologists
Iowa State University
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
National Association of Plant Breeders
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
North Central Weed Science Society
Northeastern Weed Science Society
Poultry Science Association
Society of Nematologists
Soil Science Society of America
Southern Weed Science Society
The Rodale Institute
Union of Concerned Scientists
Weed Science Society of America
Western Society of Weed Science